

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

THERE is a spirit of life and progress at work in Nottingham, where new streets and public buildings, such as a post-office and corn exchange, mechanics' institute or theatre are talked of and planned, at least, if not fully determined on. Designs have been lately prepared for a new street (originally proposed some years since) from the market-place by Peter's-square to Lister-gate, and communicating directly with the railway-station and Carrington-street. Public buildings, such as a mechanics' institute, theatre, or hotel, post-office, corn exchange, &c., are proposed to be included in the details of the design, which has been prepared by Messrs. Surplice and Son, architects, in accordance with the previously talked-of project, which was originally suggested in preference to the intended expenditure of a considerable sum in widening Wheeler-gate. The town council have, in the meantime, however, given their approval to the erection of one, at least, of the public buildings proposed to be included in the more comprehensive project, namely, a post-office, in the new street near the bottom of Castle-street. The *Nottingham Review* is of opinion that this is a very improper site.—The foundation-stone of the new town-hall at Doncaster was to be laid on Monday last, on the site of the Old Angel premises in French-gate. The new opposition to the locality of the new edifice will thus be nipped in the bud. The foundations will be formed of Hexthorpe stone. The material of the other portions of the stonework will, it is said, be of Darfield stone. The column blocks, which will be in three pieces, will weigh about six tons each. The capitals will each be in one block, 5 feet square. One of the Darfield quarries is the property of one of the contractors; the other belongs to Earl Fitzwilliam. The brickwork is said to have been relet by the contractors for the stone portion of the edifice to parties resident in Doncaster. About 300,000 bricks have been supplied by the Old Angel premises; and the additional number required will amount to about 400,000. Earl Fitzwilliam and almost all the gentry about Doncaster, in a memorial to the town council, have expressed their earnest wish that the ruins of St. Mary Magdalene may be preserved from further demolition. "As a specimen of ecclesiastical architecture in an early and interesting period of the art," they observe, "we consider the preservation of these remains to be very desirable. The art itself is now in the course of revival, and the need of it has never been felt more than at present. Together with a want of new churches, there is a growing desire to build them on principles of a correctly informed taste. But as they whose genius as well as piety raised our noble cathedrals and parish churches, have not left behind them any precepts for our guidance, it is only by observing their works, as we see them entire or in ruins, that we can gain the knowledge which is necessary for a successful imitation. And, therefore, every relic that can be saved, be its merits as a specimen of the art more or less excellent, is so far valuable as adding to the store of ancient examples, and supplying the scholar in ecclesiastical architecture with the wider means of comparison and study." "May we therefore, gentlemen, be allowed to hope that you will take into your favourable consideration the propriety of sparing them? In this hope we are encouraged by the precedent shewn to us by the metropolis of this great county, and by several other places in the kingdom, where similar ruins, having been brought out of obscurity and neglect, have been carefully preserved, and now afford an object of attraction to the antiquary the architectural student and the ordinary visitor seeking intellectual gratification." An address from the Archaeological Institute was also read to the council, but the earnest and even pathetic prayer of the memorialists in favour of the interesting but condemned relic was unheeded; "public utility" being held to be a thing of more moment than mere public taste and public feeling. The sorrowing petitioners, however, were consoled with the promise that "pictorial and architectural drawings" of the doomed object of their regard would be "furnished by draughtsmen of acknowledged ability," and "deposited with the monuments of the corporation."—At Kelghley, where

fevers have prevailed in some districts, along with nuisances obviously occasioning them, the Improvement Act Commissioners and the district magistrates have determined to carry out the powers conferred by the Act with vigour, for the suppression of all such nuisances.—In Birkenhead, last week, a sale of ground was effected at 25s. a yard, which so lately as October last would not have realized 18s.—The subscription for new schools at Liscard, for which the site offered by the Rev. Mr. Mainwaring, at New Brighton, has been accepted, amounts now to about 900l. According to the plans, by Mr. Charles Reed, architect, which have been approved of, these schools are to be in the old English style, with quaint-looking porches, seated within, and roofs of open framing stained oak.—It has been decided not to remove the ancient town hall of Leominster, as was formerly rumoured or intended. This interesting old building, which is contemporary with the market houses of Hereford, Weobley, Hay, Kingston, and Brecon, and was built by John Abel, the architect, was thoroughly repaired at great expense, and the carriage way round it widened, during the present century.—The Guildhall Assembly Room at Worcester is to be improved by raising the ceiling and taking away the columns at the ends so as to admit of altering the circular extremities to a square form; by which means also accommodation will be obtained for the Harmonic Institution or Society.—The Lye church, near Stourbridge, enlarged so as to afford 200 additional seats for adults and 400 for children, was re-opened on Wednesday week.—The newly erected church of St. Luke, at Cradley Heath, parish of Reddall Hill, is to be consecrated on the 22nd instant. It has accommodation for 1,216 persons.—The Board of Ordnance, says a Southampton paper, have sold twenty-one houses at Broad-street, Point, for demolition, to make way for the new Royal Artillery Barracks there.—The committee formed to raise funds for a new church at Deal, having obtained promises to the amount of 2,000l., have determined to proceed with the building. The site is not yet decided upon, but it is to be somewhere at the north end of the town.

KENSINGTON WORKHOUSE COMPETITION.

SIR,—Your publication contains so much really valuable matter, that few of its readers will desire the pages occupied with professional bickerings, and perhaps as far as I am concerned, it might be wise to allow the gentlemen who have honoured me by their attacks to pass unnoticed; for who cares to know if I am immaculate in the matter of Kensington Workhouse competition? Who on earth cares to sift the truth from the falsehood? Who would cross the road to clear it up, or who, in fact, feels the slightest interest in the affair, save and except those who, with vague insinuations and deductions, keep up, like hungry curs, their perpetual bark, in the individual hope of picking up the bone for themselves. Should there be, contrary to my expectations, some with so much virtuous jealousy for the honour of the profession as will stimulate them to present their cards at my office, I pledge myself to send them back perfectly satisfied that it has not suffered in my keeping.

If a man lurking behind a mask strikes down and destroys another, whom he has just before left with expressions of amity, he is justly executed as a cowardly assassin, and declared unfit to live in any community. I see little difference between this and the mutual assassin, who, willing to strike, shrinks with dastard cunning from the responsibility of his malignant efforts. Your correspondent, "G. H. S.," has, with a lively imagination, drawn (what we will call for politeness' sake) the line of beauty over the straight line of truth.

I declared the quantities false before, and not after, the opening of the first tender. I offered to prove them so, and I did, and can do so again if required. The present quantities are not minor, but taken by a respectable surveyor, and having tested them, I believe them correct. The assertion that I declared an eminent builder would take the contract at 9,000l. has just as much truth in it as the rest.

The tender accepted is 10,645l., and not

11,020l., which includes large additions and part of fittings.

But I am ashamed to take up your space with a subject which can scarcely be interesting to the general reader.—I am, Sir, &c.,

T. ALLEN.

P.S. Since writing the above, I have found out your worthy correspondent G. H. S. (one in authority), who some days since acquiesced in, and applauded, a considerable addition to the building; and a few hours before communicating with you, actually offered to bear a share in the extra expense which he thus assisted in swelling. In his own words I say, "Comment is altogether unnecessary; I am content to leave the subject to the consideration of your readers."

ERRORS IN QUANTITIES FOR ESTIMATES.—KENSINGTON WORKHOUSE COMPETITION.

SIR,—Allusions have been made, in several communications to your valuable publication, to the Kensington workhouse competition, and in your last number I see a letter on the subject containing the list of tenders last delivered. In that letter it is said (and it had been before stated, though not quite so broadly), that upon the delivery of the first tenders, and their being found to be so much beyond the architect's report (a usual thing in competition matters) that the architect accounted for the difference by a discovery he had made of an error or errors on the part of the person taking out the quantities. Now, Sir, this is a charge of a serious nature, and which I think should not be passed over lightly. I would ask by whom was this "person" employed to take out the quantities, whether by the architect or the builder; by what means the error was discovered; and whether it has been proved that there were errors of such magnitude as to warrant the whole affair being gone into "*de novo*." If not, what recompense has this person, whenever he may be, for his labour in the first instance, and for being publicly accused of inaccuracy afterwards, an accusation which, if not refuted, must be of serious consequence to any man who values his professional character. I presume that the plans have been altered since the first estimates were made, but looking at the difference in both cases between the architect's reports and the estimates delivered, it must be confessed that he, at least, is liable to error, and that any charge of error on the part of others does not come from him with a particularly good grace. On the whole, Sir, it appears to me to be another specimen of the unhappy results of competition designs, a system which, as at present managed, leads to all sorts of injustice and ill feeling. I would add, in conclusion, that I think the principle of an architect furnishing his own quantities is one by no means to be encouraged, and which no architect who wishes to preserve his independence would adopt.—Apoloising for this hasty letter,

I am, Sir, &c.,
Feb. 12th, 1847.

A SURVEYOR.

•• We have seen a letter from a highly respectable surveyor, employed to examine the first quantities, confirming the statement that they were grossly inaccurate.

FALL OF TWO OLD HOUSES IN LONG-ACRE.—Two of the old buildings requiring to be demolished to make way for the improvements connected chiefly with the opening of a principal thoroughfare between High Holborn and the Strand, gave way on Tuesday week, and were further levelled immediately thereafter. It is rather curious that the intended improvements have for some time remained in abeyance in consequence of the determination of the proprietor of one of these very houses, the George Inn, rather to perish in the fall of his house than surrender without what he considered adequate compensation. The district surveyor, a few evenings previous to his declaration to this effect, had pointed out to him the danger to which his determination subjected him and his household and customers, and recommended the adoption of precautionary measures, but without avail until a few moments before the fall, when he initiated to his inmates that they had better evacuate the premises. A way has thus been opened, sooner than would have otherwise happened, for the advancement of the improvements further contemplated.